

## LP-GAS AND OPEN FLAME USE

### SECTION 10.1 --- GENERAL

#### 10.1.1 Scope

The provisions of this standard apply to the regulation of festival events, fairs, carnivals, trade shows and exhibitions, theatrical events, and mobile food units operating within the City of Houston, and where required by the Fire Code or Fire Marshal. This standard shall pertain to the regulation of LP-gas use at these events and other hazardous operations involving the use of open flames. The requirements given herein are to be considered as MINIMUM.

#### 10.1.2 Purpose

This standard is prepared by the Life Safety Bureau (LSB) of the Houston Fire Department for the use and guidance of persons charged with selecting, purchasing, installing, approving, operating, maintaining and enforcing the safe usage of LP-gas equipment or open flame use at events and operations covered within the scope of this standard.

### SECTION 10.2 --- DEFINITIONS

#### 10.2.1 Approved

This standard is contingent upon approval of the Fire Marshal of the City of Houston. Permit applicants and the applicants agents and employees shall carry out the proposed activity in compliance with the Fire Code and other laws or regulations applicable thereto, whether specified or not, and in complete accordance with approved plans and specifications. Permits that purport to sanction a violation of the Fire Code or any other applicable law or regulation shall be void and approvals of plans and specifications in the issuance of such permits shall likewise be void.

#### 10.2.2 Standby Personnel

As provided for within the Fire Code and when required by the Fire Marshal in the interest of public safety due to the nature of the operation, activity or event which requires the use of LP-gas for the commercial preparation of food, or open flame devices, one or more Fire Inspectors, who are current members of the LSB of the Houston Fire Department, will be required to be on standby duty at such place during the connection and operation or use of the LP-gas fired appliances or open flame devices.

#### 10.2.3 District Of Limitations (DOL)

##### 10.2.3.1 DOL No. 1 (Downtown – Central Business District)

Beginning at the intersection of U.S. Highway 59 with Pierce Street; thence northerly along U.S. Highway 59 to the centerline of Buffalo Bayou; thence, westerly following the meanders of Buffalo Bayou to Franklin Street; thence, westerly along Franklin Street to Interstate Highway 45; Thence, southerly along Interstate Highway 45 to Pierce Street; thence easterly along Pierce Street to U.S. Highway 59, the place of beginning.

##### 10.2.3.2 DOL No. 2 (The Texas Medical Center)

Beginning at the intersection of Main Street with Cambridge Street; thence southerly along Main Street to Holcombe Boulevard; thence easterly along Holcombe Boulevard to Braeswood Boulevard; thence northerly along Braeswood Boulevard to North MacGregor Way; thence westerly along Cambridge Street to Main Street, the place of beginning.

## SECTION 10.3 -- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

### 10.3.1 Standby Personnel permit.

A permit for Standby Personnel shall be required for all events where there is in use 4 or more LP-gas cooking appliances. All events within the boundaries of the DOL No. 1 and DOL No. 2 shall require a standby permit for any number of LP-gas cooking appliances.

Exception: The standby requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Fire Marshal, under the following conditions:

1. There are no more than 4 appliances in use at the event and the appliances are of the approved, portable type that uses non-refillable canisters. (For food preparation inside a building or structure, see Section 3803.2.1.7, of the Houston Fire Code.)

2. The storing, handling, or use of LP-gas in connection with a mobile food unit in DOL No. 1, except that a permit for standby personnel shall be required if there are 4 or more mobile food units utilizing LP-gas cooking appliances in one area.

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### 10.3.2 Permit for commercial cooking

An LP-gas permit is required when LP-gas appliances are used for commercial cooking, including temporary commercial cooking.

### 10.3.3 Plans

All permits for standby personnel and/or LP-gas or open flame use shall be applied for at least two weeks prior to the event. Plans shall be submitted in a Plan View format showing cooking booth locations, and shall be affixed to the Permit Application. Permits shall be obtained at the City of Houston Permit Office, 3300 Main Street; telephone: 713-535-7897.

### 10.3.4 Licensed contractors required

Only personnel licensed by the RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS shall perform all connections for LP-gas appliances. Licensed personnel shall perform all connections of LP-gas at all events where 4 or more appliances are to be connected, and at all events held in DOL No. 1 and No. 2, regardless of the number of appliances.

**Exceptions:** 1. If an LP-gas contractor is not available due to conditions out of the control of the event coordinator, (example; unable to find an LP-gas company to handle the event, LP-gas company fails to show up for event), connections to LP-gas appliances may only be made in the presence of the Standby Inspector, who will insure that the excess gas is burned off before the connection is broken (example; the valve on the LP-gas container is closed and the excess is burned off at the burner prior to breaking the connection at the LP-gas). At least one additional standby inspector will be required for the event to accomplish this.

2. When approved in advance, the licensed LP-gas personnel on site to make and break connections may not be required to be in attendance for the entire event. This will be contingent upon the LP-gas needs of the event such as, when the appliances can operate all day on one container with no change out required.

3. Spare LP-gas containers shall be stored in an approved location.

4. This contingency is not intended for use as a substitute for providing an approved LP-gas company.

#### **10.3.5 Container size, DOL No. 1 and No. 2**

**Except as provided in section 10.11.6,** the maximum single LP-gas container size allowed within DOL No. 1 and No. 2 will be limited to 60-lbs water capacity. Two 30-lb containers may be manifolded when equipment is approved in advance and in compliance with section 10.3.4 above. When the project need is such that a greater amount of LP-gas is required for a specific appliance, 100-lb containers may be used when approved in advance.

Exception: 1. When approved, listed LP-gas commercial food service appliances are allowed to be used for food preparation within restaurants and in attended commercial food catering operations provided that an individual appliance shall not have more than two 10-oz (0.3 L), non-refillable butane gas containers connected directly to the appliance any time. Containers shall comply with nationally recognized standards, have a maximum water capacity of 1.08 lbs (0.5 kg) per container and shall not be manifolded. The appliance's fuel containers shall be an integral part of the listed commercial food service device and shall be connected without the use of a rubber hose. The aggregate amount of LP-gas used or stored shall not exceed 60 lbs (27 kg) LP-gas capacity. In educational occupancies, portable LP-gas containers shall not be used or stored except as permitted by Sections 3803.2.1.4, of the Fire Code.

#### **10.3.6 Container size outside DOL No. 1**

The maximum single LP-gas container size allowed outside the DOL may be 100-lb gas capacity when approved in advance. The approval will be conditional, based on the projected need of gas for specific appliances and/or the presence of Standby Personnel.

#### **10.3.7 Storage of LP-gas containers in DOL No. 1 and 2**

The aggregate capacity of any one installation shall not exceed a water capacity of 2,000 gallons. Storage of spare LP-gas containers shall be in approved locations.

Exception: In particular installations, this capacity limit shall be determined by the fire code official, after consideration of special features such as topographical conditions, nature of occupancy, and proximity to buildings, capacity of proposed containers, degree of fire protection to be provided.

#### **10.3.8 Inspection sticker**

An inspection sticker must be displayed on equipment indicating the equipment has been inspected within the past 12-month period by licensed personnel (see 10.3.4 above).

#### **10.3.9 Protective barriers**

Protective physical barriers such as chain, ropes, or similar obstacles must be installed to prevent public access to LP-gas containers and cooking areas.

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**10.3.10 Securing LP- gas containers**

All LP-gas containers (empty or full) shall be secured in an upright position in such a manner as not to fall over.

**APPENDIX-E**

**MOBILE FOOD UNIT**

**SECTION 10.9 --- GENERAL**

**10.9.1 Scope**

The provisions of this standard apply to the regulation of mobile food units (MFU) within the City of Houston, and where required by the Fire Code or Fire Marshal. The requirements given herein are to be considered as a MINIMUM.

**10.9.2 Purpose**

This standard is prepared by the Life Safety Bureau (LSB) of the Houston Fire Department for the use and guidance of persons charged with selecting, purchasing, installing, approving, maintaining and enforcing the safe usage of LP-gas equipment or open flame use within mobile food units covered within the scope of this standard.

**SECTION 10.10 --- DEFINITIONS**

**10.10.1 Approved**

This standard is contingent upon approval of the Fire Marshal of the City of Houston. Permit applicants and the applicants agents and employees shall carry out the proposed activity in compliance with the Fire Code and other laws or regulations applicable thereto, whether specified or not, and in complete accordance with approved plans and specifications. Permits that purport to sanction a violation of the Fire Code or any other applicable law or regulation shall be void and approvals of plans and specifications in the issuance of such permits shall likewise be void.

**10.10.2 Permits**

A permit for LP-gas usage will be for up to five legal addresses. Other applicable permits are defined within this standard.

**10.10.3 LP-gas**

An operational permit is required to install or maintain any LP-gas container of 125 gallons (423L) aggregate water capacity or more or operate any tank vehicle that is used for the transportation of LP gas.

An operational permit is required for the storage, handling or use of any amount of LP- gas in, on, or in connection with demonstrations, public exhibitions, temporary commercial cooking or on mobile food units.

For a single container with a capacity of 500-gallon (1893L) water capacity or for one or more containers with an aggregate capacity of 2,000 gallons (7572L) water capacity or more, the installer shall submit

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plans for the permit. For operational permit requirements for LP-gas storage, handling, or use see Chapter 38 of the Fire Code.

#### **10.10.4 Maintenance Log**

A document recording dates, name of company, license number and name of personnel connecting LPG or exchanging containers.

#### **10.10.5 Districts of Limitations (DOL)**

Districts of Limitations shall be as noted in Section 10.2.3 of this Standard.

### **SECTION 10.11 --- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **10.11.1 Permit for commercial cooking**

When LP-gas appliances are used for commercial cooking, a permit to use LP-gas for temporary commercial cooking shall be required. One LP-gas Permit will apply to all appliances used in each mobile food unit.

Permits shall be required to store, use, handle or dispense LP-gas or to install or maintain LP-gas container (s) in excess of 125 gallons (473L) aggregate water capacity. A permit is required to use any amount of LP-gas for demonstrations, public exhibitions, temporary commercial cooking or in mobile food units. As used in Chapter 38 of the Fire Code, the term mobile food unit shall have the meaning set forth in Chapter 20 of the City Code of Ordinances.

#### **10.11.2 Mobile Food Unit (MFU)**

No permit for the use of LP-gas in connection with a MFU shall be issued unless the operator provides a detailed description of the means and methods by which the operator will secure the LP-gas container against shifting (bracing) and will protect the LP-gas container against damage (blocking) by third parties, which means and methods are approved by the fire department.

#### **10.11.3 Filling of LP-gas containers**

Distributors shall not fill an LP-gas container for which a permit is required unless a permit for installation has been issued for that location by the code official.

#### **10.11.4 Plans**

All permits for standby personnel and/or LP-gas or open flame use shall be applied for at least two weeks prior to setup. Site Plans shall be submitted in a Plan View format showing cooking locations, and shall be affixed to the Permit Application. Permits shall be obtained at the City of Houston Permit Office, 3300 Main Street; telephone: 713-535-7897.

Site Plan shall show:

1. MFU location.
2. LPG location and size of container.
3. Electrical hookup.

4. Structures on property.
5. Method LPG containers are secured in upright position.
6. Locations of other MFU's on same property.

#### **10.11.5 Maintain logs of LP-gas connections on MFU**

Only personnel licensed by the RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS will perform connections for LP-gas appliances. A log shall be maintained on the MFU for all connections performed on all LP-gas appliances. All logs shall be maintained by the MFU operator/owner and made available to the Fire Marshal for review.

#### **10.11.6 Container size - DOL No. 1 and No. 2**

The maximum single LP-gas container size allowed within DOL No. 1 will be limited to 40-lb gas capacity.

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Two 30-lb containers may be manifold when equipment is approved in advance and in compliance with section 10.3.6 above. When a greater amount of LP-gas is required, a 100-lb container may be used when approved in advance.

#### **10.11.7 Container size outside DOL No. 1**

The maximum single LP-gas container size allowed outside the DOL may be 100 lb gas capacity when approved in advance. The approval will be conditional, based on the projected need of gas for specific appliances.

#### **10.11.8 Storage of LP-gas containers**

Storage of spare LP-gas containers shall be in approved locations not accessible to the public. Storage of LP-gas within DOL No. 1 and No. 2 shall be approved in writing.

#### **10.11.9 Inspection sticker**

An approved inspection sticker indicating the month and the year of inspection must be displayed on all LP gas appliances signifying licensed personnel have inspected the equipment within the past 12-month period. In addition, a receipt must be provided with the VIN or the license plate number displayed on it for the vehicle, on which it is attached.

#### **10.11.10 Protective barriers**

The operator of a MFU that uses any amount of LP-gas to prepare food must block or otherwise prevent public access to all LP-gas containers by erecting a suitable enclosure, physical barrier, or obstacle pursuant to the plan detailing the location and method of restricting public access to LP-gas containers submitted to and approved by the fire department prior to permit issuance.

#### **10.11.11 Securing LP-gas containers.**

All LP-gas containers (empty or full) shall be secured in an upright position in such a manner as not to fall over.

1. Vehicle impact protection, such as car stops or other barriers approved by the Fire Marshal will be required. When possible, positioning of the MFU in such a manner to utilize existing barriers on the

property such as substantial sign posts, fences, or other approved structures may be used as vehicle impact protection.

2. "Danger - No Smoking" signs approved by the Fire Marshal shall be visible near LP-gas containers. Signs shall be in English and Spanish.

3. A barrier, such as a fence, shall be provided to maintain a distance of at least three (3) feet of separation between the public and the propane containers.

**10.11.12 Generators**

Refueling of generators shall be performed in an approved location not less than 20 feet from the MFU. Fuel shall be stored in a metal, UL or FM approved flammable liquid safety container, in an approved location. Generators shall be grounded in an approved method.

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The operator of a MFU that uses any amount of LP-gas to prepare food shall not operate such unit within 60 feet of another MFU, except, at festivals and events approved by the Fire Marshal. ¶

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**10.11.13 Portable Fire Extinguishers**

A portable fire extinguisher (4A-40BC minimum) shall be provided. In addition, a "Type K" portable extinguisher shall also protect cooking equipment involving vegetable or animal oils and fats. Both fire extinguishers shall be inspected and tagged annually.

**10.11.14 Ventilation System**

The Ventilation system in connection with hoods shall be operated at the required rate of air movement, and classified grease filters shall be in place when equipment under a kitchen grease hood is used.

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**10.11.15 Temporary Wiring**

Temporary wiring methods shall meet the applicable provisions of the Fire Code, the Building Code, and the Electrical Code.

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